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REMARKS

Amendments to the claims

Claims 1-16 are pending in the present application. With this response, claims 1 and 16 have been amended and new claims 17 and 18 have been introduced. Support for the amendments can be found, for example, in Figures 5B, 5C, 5F, 5G and related portions of the specification. No new matter has been added.

35 USC § 102 rejections

In the Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-3, 4, 7, 9, 10 and 16 under 35 USC § 102(b) as being unpatentable over Japan 2001-210126. The Applicants respectfully disagree.

Amended claims 1 and 16 recite that *"the fitting portion comprises two side walls extending upwardly and separately, the illumination tube is disposed in the fitting portion and between the side walls, and at least one of the side walls extends toward and beyond the top of the illumination tube for preventing bending of the diffuser".* In stark contrast, Japan 2001-210126 shows support fittings 2 which do not have side walls extending beyond the top of illumination tube 1. See, for example, Figures 2 and 3 of Japan 2001-210126, where it is shown that the sidewalls 2 do not go over the top of tube 1.

Therefore, claims 1 and 16 are novel over Japan 2001-210126, together with claims 2-4, 7, 9 and 10, at least by virtue of their dependency on claim 1.

35 USC § 103 rejections

In the Action, the Examiner rejects claims 5, 6, 8, 11 and 12 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable Japan 2001-210126 and claims 13-15 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable Japan 2001-210126 in view of U.S. Pat. Pub. 2002/0044437 to Lee. The Applicants respectfully disagree in view of the arguments presented with respect to the

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35 USC § 102 section above. In particular, claims 5, 6, 8, and 11-15 depend on claim 1 and the Examiner has not shown to the Applicants where, in Japan 2001-210126 or Lee, *"the fitting portion comprises two side walls extending upwardly and separately, the illumination tube is disposed in the fitting portion and between the side walls, and at least one of the side walls extends toward and beyond the top of the illumination tube for preventing bending of the diffuser"* of claim 1 is shown, taught or suggested. Therefore, the Applicants submit that claims 5, 6, 8, and 11-15 are patentable over the cited art.

New claims

New claims 17 and 18 have been added. Those claims are dependent on claims 1 and 16, respectively. Therefore, they are deemed to be patentable for at least the same reasons presented with reference to claims 1 and 16.

The Applicants submit that all claims of the application as amended herein are in condition for allowance. Prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required or credit overpayment to deposit account no. 12-0415. In particular, if this response is not timely filed, then the Commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including

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a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136 (a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary to make this response timely filed and the petition fee due in connection therewith may be charged to deposit account no. 12-0415.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being
facsimile transmitted to the United States Patent
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on

January 9, 2006
(Date of Deposit)

Susan Papp
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